Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A thermal post-combustion device comprising a burner, the burner having a combustion nozzle with a substantially hollow-cylindrical base member at least virtually closed at one end by a cover and to which fuel gas is supplied axially at a particular pressure, which gas flows out radially via a plurality of main discharge openings,

wherein

the main discharge openings are arranged at such a radial distance from the axis of the base member and exhibit such a cross-section that, at the particular pressure of the supplied fuel gas, individual flames form at the main discharge openings which substantially do not overlap; and

wherein at least one small-area passage opening is provided in at least one of the cover and in the region of the base member close to the cover, wherein the total area of all the small-area passage openings in at least one of the cover and the base member is less than the total area of all the main discharge openings.

2. (Previously Amended) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 1, wherein the main discharge openings are located at the ends of discharge tubes which project outwards from the base member in the form of a star.

3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) A thermal post-combustion device according to ~~claim 2~~claim 1, wherein a small-area passage opening for a fuel gas forming a pilot flame is provided in at least one discharge tube.

5. (Previously Amended) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 1, wherein the burner comprises a swirl means, which imparts eddy flow to the pollutant-containing exhaust air flowing around the combustion nozzle.

6. (Previously Amended) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 5, wherein the swirl means comprises at least one set of blades extending radially outwards in the manner of spokes.

7. (Previously Amended) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 6, wherein the swirl means comprises a first set of blades, which extend between a combustion nozzle housing coaxially surrounding the combustion nozzle and an intermediate ring, and a second set of blades, which extend between the intermediate ring and an outer ring.

8. (Previously Amended) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 6, wherein at least some of the blades have an inherently twisted shape.

9. (New) A thermal post-combustion device comprising a burner, the burner having a combustion nozzle with a substantially hollow-cylindrical base member at least virtually closed at one end by a cover and to which fuel gas is supplied axially at a particular pressure, which gas flows out radially via a plurality of main discharge openings,

wherein

the main discharge openings are arranged at such a radial distance from the axis of the base member and exhibit such a cross-section that, at the particular pressure of the supplied fuel gas, individual flames form at the main discharge openings which substantially do not overlap, the main discharge openings being located at the ends of discharge tubes which project outwards from the base member in the form of a star, at least one of the discharge tubes comprising a small-area passage opening for a fuel gas forming a pilot flame.

10. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 9, wherein at least one small-area passage opening is provided in at least one of the cover and in the region of the base member close to the cover, wherein the total area of all the small-area passage openings in at least one of the cover and the base member is less than the total area of all the main discharge openings.

11. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 9, wherein the burner comprises a swirl means, which imparts eddy flow to the pollutant-containing exhaust air flowing around the combustion nozzle.

12. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 11, wherein the swirl means comprises at least one set of blades extending radially outwards in the manner of spokes.

13. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 12, wherein the swirl means comprises a first set of blades, which extend between a combustion nozzle housing coaxially surrounding the combustion nozzle and an intermediate ring, and a second set of blades, which extend between the intermediate ring and an outer ring.

14. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 12, wherein at least some of the blades have an inherently twisted shape.

15. (New) A thermal post-combustion device comprising a burner, the burner having a combustion nozzle with a substantially hollow-cylindrical base member at least virtually closed at one end by a cover and to which fuel gas is supplied axially at a particular pressure, which gas flows out radially via a plurality of main discharge openings,

wherein

the main discharge openings are arranged at such a radial distance from the axis of the base member and exhibit such a cross-section that, at the particular pressure of the supplied fuel gas, individual

flames form at the main discharge openings which substantially do not overlap, and

wherein the burner comprises a swirl means, which imparts eddy flow to the pollutant-containing exhaust air flowing around the combustion nozzle.

16. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 15, wherein the main discharge openings are located at the ends of discharge tubes which project outwards from the base member in the form of a star.

17. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 15, wherein at least one small-area passage opening is provided in at least one of the cover and in the region of the base member close to the cover, wherein the total area of all the small-area passage openings in at least one of the cover and the base member is less than the total area of all the main discharge openings.

18. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 15, wherein a small-area passage opening for a fuel gas forming a pilot flame is provided in at least one discharge tube.

19. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 15, wherein the swirl means comprises at least one set of blades extending radially outwards in the manner of spokes.

20. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 18, wherein the swirl means comprises a first set of blades, which extend between a combustion nozzle housing coaxially surrounding the combustion nozzle and an intermediate ring, and a second set of blades, which extend between the intermediate ring and an outer ring.

21. (New) A thermal post-combustion device according to claim 18, wherein at least some of the blades have an inherently twisted shape.